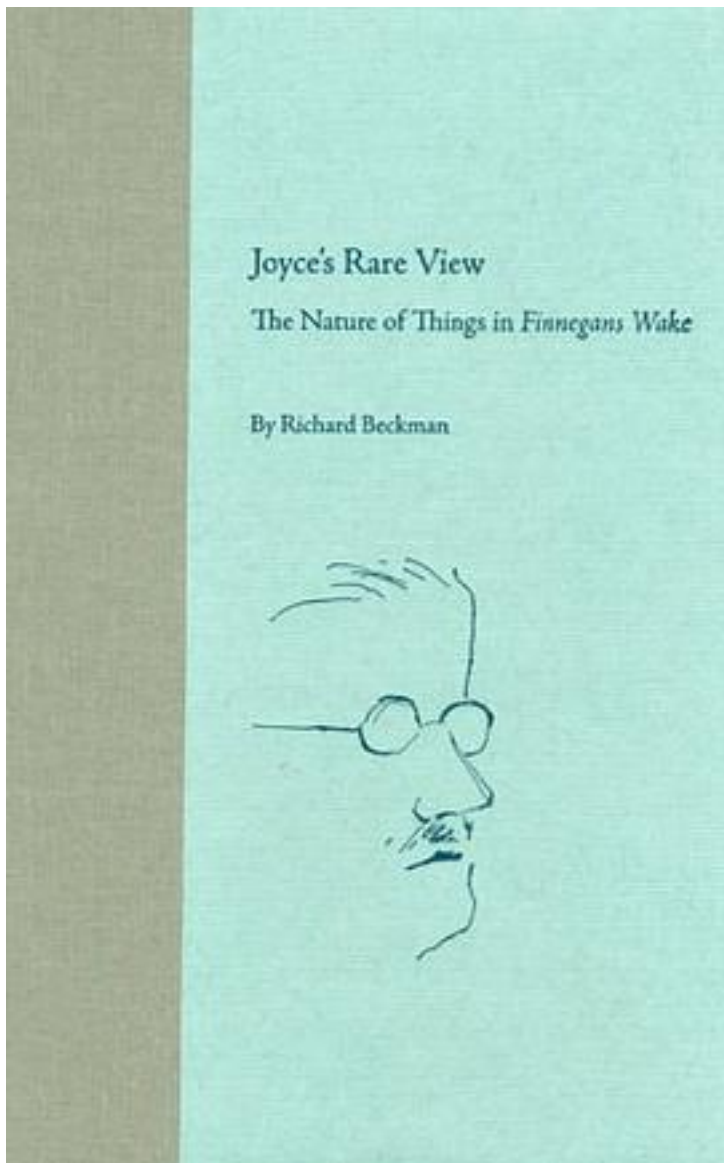


Joyce's Rare View



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Richard Beckman argues that readers of "Finnegans" "Wake "must develop a new method of reading that flows from the text itself. Focusing on the mode of perception in the "Wake"--seeing the world obliquely because that is often the only way to get at the nature of things--Beckman maintains that Joyce's satire depends on looking at the public scene from behind, a view at the same time vaudevillian and philosophic. Indirect perception is at once the basis for Joyce's peculiar locutions, conveying incompatible double and triple meanings, and also an account of how the mind works. Thus, Beckman shows, the object world in the "Wake" is as unstable as a troubled dream, accessible only by glimpses and guesses at suspected overtones of significance. If the "Wake" shows only the wrong side of things, this perception hardly belongs to the "Wake" alone, but Beckman maintains that no other text has presented this idea with such imitative power, applied it to life so energetically, or wrung so much humor from it. In the "Wake," Joyce has made his case for choosing the wrong and even oddball way of considering the human situation--as opposed to the ever-present culture of received opinions--and he creates a book of life that goes nowhere and everywhere, doubling back on itself, methodically seeing things the wrong way, and conjuring up characters, events, and meanings that are inherently reversible. Written for students of the "Wake" and Joyce scholars and critics seeking innovative commentary that renders familiar passages fresh, "Joyce's Rare View" offers new, close readings of a myriad of passages and phrases in the "Wake," illuminating many of the themes of this encyclopedic satire.

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